

Appl'n No: 10/564,450
Reply to Office Action dated July 26, 2006
Amdt dated October 26, 2006

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS:

The attached sheets of drawings include changes to Figures 1-9. These sheets, replace the original sheets including Figures 1-9. In Figure 1, reference numbers 32 and 63 have been added. In Figures 2 and 3, reference number 34 has been added. In Figures 4 and 5, reference numbers 30 and 63 have been added. In Figure 7, reference number 30 has been added. And, in Figures 8 and 9, reference number 63 has been added.

Attachment: Replacement Sheets (Figures 1-9)

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 6-18 remain in the application. Claims 2-5 have been cancelled.

First, the specification has been amended to include reference to the related applications to which this application claim priority. Additionally, replacements sheets for Figures 1-9 have been submitted including additional reference numbers corresponding to elements described in the specification. Applicant submits that no new matter has been added.

Second, claims 1-18 stand rejected to under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Specifically, the Examiner states that the "elongated control arm" recited in claim 1 fails to set forth the function and purpose of the control arm in a manner to clearly and positively define the invention. In response, Applicant has amended claim 1 to set forth that the control arm further defines a contoured seat bolster section for supporting an occupant on the seat frame assembly. Therefore, Applicant respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawal.

Third, claims 1-5, 8-11, and 18 stand rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Fourrey (USPN 4,938,529). The Examiner contends that Fourrey discloses a side frame member which is operatively attached to an actuator 70, 72, 78 and an elongated control arm 8,19 via linkage assembly 52, 56 wherein the linkage assembly moves the control arm 8, 19 between various positions in response to movement of the actuator.

In response, Applicant has amended independent claim 1 to set forth a seat frame assembly for compactly folding a motor vehicle seat, the seat frame assembly comprising: a frame; an actuator (30) pivotally coupled to the frame; an elongated control arm (36) having a first end pivotally coupled to the frame and an opposite second end for movement between a stowed position generally parallel and adjacent the frame and a support position spaced from the frame defining a contoured seat bolster section for supporting an occupant on the seat frame assembly; a linkage assembly (34) coupled between the control arm (36) and the actuator (30) for moving the control arm (36) between the stowed position and support position in response to actuation of the actuator (36), said linkage assembly (34) including a first link member (38) extending between a distal end fixedly secured to the actuator (30) for synchronous pivotal movement therewith and an opposite proximal end, a second link member (40) having a distal end pivotally secured to the control arm (36) and an opposite proximal end, and a link pin (42) pivotally coupling the proximal ends of the first and second link members for operatively coupling the actuator (30) and control arm (36); and a pivot pin (32) pivotally connecting and supporting both the actuator (30) and the first link member (38) on the frame for providing synchronous pivotal movement and direct driving of the first link member relative to the frame in response to pivotal movement of the actuator.

Fourrey clearly does not disclose a pivot pin pivotally connecting and supporting both the actuator 70, 72, 78 and the first link member 56 on the frame for providing synchronous pivotal movement and directly driving of the first link member relative to the frame in response to

pivotal movement of the actuator. Rather, the actuator of Fourrey includes an arm 70 pivotally connected to the frame by pin 74 for engaging a wheel 78 independently rotatably connected to the frame by pin 80. The first link 56 is pivotally connected to the wheel via a hole for movement therewith in response to pivotal movement of the arm 70. Therefore, Fourrey does not disclose a pivot pin for pivotally connecting both the actuator arm 70 and the first link 56 to the frame for providing synchronous pivotal movement thereof and for directly driving the first link 56 in response to pivotal movement of the arm 70. The first link 56 is driven by the wheel 78 which is independently rotatably mounted to the frame by pin 80. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests the rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 1-7 and 12 stand further rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Kaneko et al. (USPN 4,353,595). The Examiner contends that Kaneko discloses a side frame member 2 with an actuator 18 secured thereto, an elongated control arm 8 which is secured to the actuator via linkage assembly 9, 11, wherein the linkage assembly comprises a first link 11 secured between the actuator, a second link 9 and a link pin 17. The first link is pivotally attached to the side frame member via pin 14.

In response, and as stated above, Kaneko also does not disclose a pivot pin pivotally connecting and supporting both the actuator 18 and the first link member 11 on the frame for providing synchronous pivotal movement and directly driving of the first link member relative to the frame in response to pivotal movement of the actuator. Rather, the first link member 11 includes a first end coupled by pin 14 to rotatably link 4. Upon pivotal movement of the frame 2

about the bearing 5, the link 4 controls movement of the first link 11 about the pivot pin 15 to in turn move the second link 9. That is, the pivot pin 15 provides the axis about which the first link 11 pivots. Additionally, the distal end of the first link is slidably connected to the link 4, and not fixedly secured to the actuator 18. Kaneko does not even include a pivot pin which pivotally connects and supports both the actuator 18 and the first link 11 on the frame 2. Therefore, in light of the amendments to independent claim 1, Applicant respectfully requests the rejection be withdrawn.

Finally, the Examiner indicated that claim 13-17 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejections under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

In response, Applicant has rewritten claim 12 in independent form including all of the limitations of allowable claim 13. In summary, none of the prior art disclose a seat frame assembly as set forth in the combination of independent claim 12 including a plate extending between a lower end pivotally secured to the frame and an upper end slidably coupled to the frame wherein the plate operatively contacts the control arm such that movement of the control arm between the stowed and support positions causes concurrent movement of the plate.

Therefore, Applicant submits that each of the remaining claims 1 and 6-18 clearly distinguish the invention over the prior art. Accordingly, it is believed that the application is in condition for immediate allowance and Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

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Should the Examiner have any questions regarding the response to this Office Action, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney for the applicant.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any underpayment or credit any overpayment of the above fees associated with this Communication to Deposit Account No. 50-1759.

Respectfully submitted,



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